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**THE MEDIA PORTRAYAL OF ARAB SPRING IN
NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS: THE CASE OF PAKISTANI
THE NEWS INTERNATIONAL AND SAUDI ARABIAN
*ARAB NEWS***



NAEEM AFZAL


UUM
Universiti Utara Malaysia

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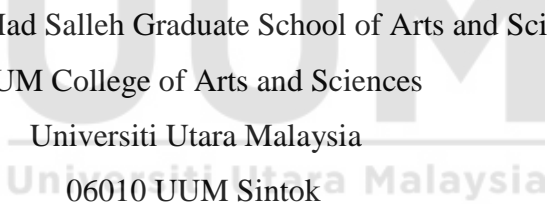
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Abstrak

Rencana sering dilihat sebagai alat sebaran akhbar yang mendedahkan unsur-unsur yang tersirat seperti konteks sosial dan budaya, latar belakang penulis rencana dan kepercayaan ideologi akhbar dalam sesebuah masyarakat. Pembaca bukan sahaja berkomunikasi dengan rencana tersebut, tetapi juga membuat tafsiran secara subjektif. Namun, tidak banyak yang diketahui tentang bagaimana kandungan media dihasilkan. Memandangkan kajian berkenaan Kebangkitan Arab tidak dilakukan sepenuhnya di dalam rencana-rencana tersebut, kajian ini meneliti bagaimana rencana akhbar arus perdana berbahasa Inggeris di Pakistan dan Arab Saudi menggambarkan kebangkitan ini. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan analisis wacana kritis, kajian ini meneliti suara akhbar bukan Arab (Pakistan), *The News International* dan akhbar Arab (Saudi), *Arab News*, dengan tujuan untuk memahami Kebangkitan Arab. Data kajian kualitatif ini terdiri daripada empat puluh lapan rencana yang dikumpul sepanjang tempoh Kebangkitan Arab mendapat liputan luas media, dari Januari 2011 hingga Disember 2012. Analisis data dijalankan berdasarkan konsep kategori skematik van Dijk, liputan ideologi dan peranti retorik yang digunakan dalam wacana media serta tiga mod pujukan, iaitu etos, patos dan logos. Penemuan kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa para penulis rencana bagi kedua-dua akhbar menggambarkan Kebangkitan Arab secara positif sebagai suatu pergerakan 'perubahan'. Para penulis menentang pihak berkuasa di negara-negara yang terlibat melalui perwakilan negatif lain (*them*) dan menyokong penunjuk perasaan yang menuntut perubahan, melalui perwakilan sendiri positif (*us*). Kajian ini juga mendedahkan bagaimana akhbar berkongsi emosi penunjuk perasaan secara retorik dan memberi justifikasi permintaan mereka untuk menyingkirkan rejim-rejim diktator. Sebagai kesimpulan, kajian ini menyumbang kepada pemahaman kritikal tentang bagaimana rencana akhbar boleh memperkasakan/melemahkan pembaca melalui penggunaan wacana yang betul.

Kata kunci: Penggambaran media, Wacana akhbar, Rencana, Kebangkitan Arab, Analisis wacana kritis

Abstract

Editorials are often viewed as the mouthpiece of newspapers which reveal embedded elements such as social and cultural contexts, background of editorial writers and ideological beliefs of a newspaper in a society. Readers not only communicate with the editorials, but the former also interpret them subjectively. Yet, not much is known about how the media content is produced. Given that the Arab Spring has not been fully examined in the editorials, this study explores how editorials of mainstream English language newspapers in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia portray the uprising. Using a critical discourse analysis approach, the study examines the voice of a non-Arab (Pakistani) newspaper, *The News International*, and an Arab (Saudi) newspaper, *Arab News*, with a view to understand the Arab Spring. Data for this qualitative study consist of forty-eight editorials collected, during the period of high media coverage of the Arab Spring, from January 2011 to December 2012. The data are analysed based on van Dijk's concepts of schematic categories of editorials, ideological square and rhetorical devices utilised in the media discourse and the three modes of persuasion, namely, ethos, pathos and logos. The findings reveal that the editorial writers in both newspapers positively portray the Arab Spring as a movement of 'change'. The writers oppose the authorities in the affected countries through negative other-representation (*them*) and favour the protesters, who demanded change, through positive self-representation (*us*). The study also reveals how the newspaper rhetoric shares the protesters' emotions and justifies their demands to remove the dictatorial regimes. As a conclusion, the study contributes to the critical understanding of how newspaper editorials can (dis)empower the readers through the use of carefully constructed discourse.

Keywords: Media portrayal, Newspaper discourse, Editorials, Arab Spring, Critical discourse analysis

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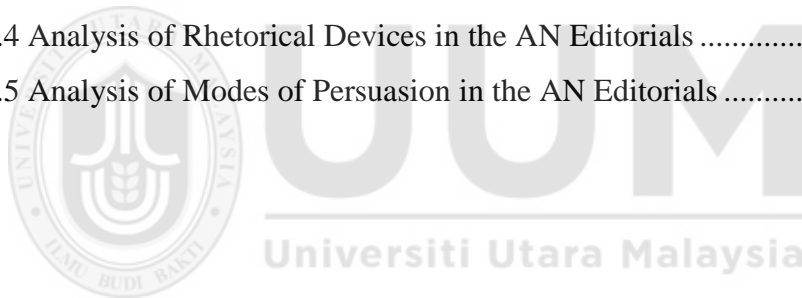
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List of Abbreviations

AN	<i>Arab News</i>
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NI	<i>The News International</i>
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
RCD	Democratic Constitutional Rally
UN	United Nations



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The power of the media is generally both symbolic and persuasive since the media potentially control the readers' minds. This power highlights the role of the media within a broader framework consisting of social, cultural, political and economic power structures of a society. The mediated information is often considered biased or concealed in such a style that it reshapes the direction of knowledge and beliefs of audiences. Hence, control over means of mass communication is significant to maintain power over the media discourse. The influence exerted by the media discourse can be realized through discourse strategies, structures, content and forms practiced in the press and their relationship with institutions and audiences. Therefore, in order to examine various types of stories reported in the news media structural properties of the media discourse and conditions under which it is produced must be made known (van Dijk, 1995d).

The media discourse acts as a source of information for people's understanding which is reflected in knowledge, opinions and attitudes of both elite and non-elite audiences (van Dijk, 2000b). The media discourse refers to various forms of interactions in either written or spoken form which targets non-present readers (O'Keeffe, 2006). Some of its major roles consist of delivering information, imparting education and interpreting events to readers (Hiebert & Gibbons, 2000). Owing to its dominant grip over masses, the media discourse becomes inescapable as it is widely disseminated and highly persuasive especially when it shapes the public opinion (Talbot, 2007)

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